

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action mailed April 27, 2005.

Claims 1 – 21 were pending, and of the Office Action rejected all claims. Specifically, Claims 1 – 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, as being indefinite. Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schoof (U.S. Patent No. 5,440,624) and McNerney (U.S. Patent No. 5,999,208). Claims 2 – 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schoof, McNerney, and Minneman et al.

The Office Action notes that the effective filing date of the subject matter defined in the pending claims in this application is “November 29, 2000.” This appears to be in error, as the claim of priority dates to May 19, 2000. A copy of the filing receipt is enclosed which shows the correct foreign priority date.

With respect to the 112 rejections, the present claims have been amended to overcome the noted informalities. With respect, to claims 1, 2, 7, 12 and 17, however, it is believed that “other attendant electronic equipment” (as amended) is sufficiently definite. The icon displays, in fact, may be represented as other computers, etc. and not specific attendees. In fact, the cited McNerney reference uses “virtual” chairs to represent each attendant. The attendant electronic equipment may also in fact be represented by textual names, etc. in the present invention.

The Office Action has rejected Claims 1, 2, 7, 12 and 17 in view of Schoof. Each of these claims has at least two specific limitations which are not present in the Schoof reference. Specifically, Schoof is cited as disclosing an attendant electronic equipment having “an equipment management unit for managing the state of each electronic

equipment connected to the communication network” (citing Schoof at Col. 3, lines 20 – 45) and “a proceedings control unit for obtaining information for preparing the proceedings by using the contents of the presentation presented by the presentation unit” (Col. 6, lines 64 – 68). However, the cited sections do not support the rejections of these limitations. Both of these limitations are specifically required to be part of the “attendant electronic equipment” and not part of the system controller and/or server. The cited references to Schoof only disclose these limitations as part of a system controller and not part of each of the attendant electronic equipment. As shown in Fig. 7 of the present invention, a server 11 has certain components, but each attendant electronic equipment 14 has separate components, including a proceedings control unit and equipment management unit (authentication/management unit).

The Schoof reference simply fails to disclose that any of the data/voice/fax terminals include these components and/or functionality. The noted citations simply refer to the conference controller 130, and not to the attendant terminals. For example, at Col. 3, lines 20 – 45, the “conference administration system” executes the rule base. There is no support that each attendant terminal has the ability to perform an equipment management function.

Similarly, at Col 6, lines 64 – 68, the “complete archived record of the conference is maintained within conference controller 130 and its digital memory (11, 12, and 13), and access is permitted, optionally, to the archived record either during the conference or anytime after completion of the conference.” Thus, only the controller 130 has the ability to direct the proceedings. There is no disclosure that each attendant terminal has the ability to control the proceedings, as specifically claimed in the present claims.

For at least these reasons, the present claims are believed to now be in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference will expedite the prosecution of this case, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney and the noted telephone number.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees (or credit any overpayment) associated with this communication and which may be required under 37 CFR §1.78 to Deposit Account No. 50-2603, referencing Attorney Docket No. 352738.00400.

A duplicate sheet is attached.

Respectfully submitted,

REED SMITH LLP

Dated: July 27, 2005

By: _____

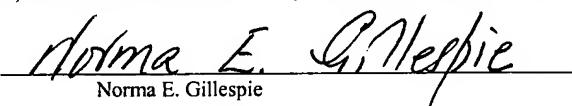

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as Express mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, US Patent & Trademark Office, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on July 27, 2005.

Dated: July 27, 2005


Norma E. Gillespie